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Tender

FTS047 Pathways to Start - Lot 1 Argyll and Bute

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

F02: Contract notice

Notice identifier: 2025/S 000-045970

Procurement identifier (OCID): ocds-h6vhtk-058131

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Section I: Contracting authority

I.1) Name and addresses

Highlands and Islands Enterprise

An Lòchran, 10 Inverness Campus

Inverness

IV2 5NA

Email

hieprocurement@Hient.co.uk

Telephone

+44 1463245245

Country

United Kingdom

NUTS code

UKM6 - Highlands and Islands

Internet address(es)

Main address

<http://www.hie.co.uk>

Buyer's address

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/search/Search_AuthProfile.aspx?ID=AA00313

I.2) Information about joint procurement

The contract is awarded by a central purchasing body

I.3) Communication

The procurement documents are available for unrestricted and full direct access, free of charge, at

www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk

Additional information can be obtained from the above-mentioned address

Tenders or requests to participate must be submitted electronically via

www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk

I.4) Type of the contracting authority

Regional or local Agency/Office

I.5) Main activity

Economic and financial affairs

Section II: Object

II.1) Scope of the procurement

II.1.1) Title

FTS047 Pathways to Start - Lot 1 Argyll and Bute

Reference number

FTS047 - Lot 1

II.1.2) Main CPV code

- 80000000 - Education and training services

II.1.3) Type of contract

Services

II.1.4) Short description

THIS IS THE CONTRACT NOTICE FOR LOT 1 ARGYLL and BUTE.

HIE is looking to procure a supplier to deliver a programme to support underrepresented groups in entrepreneurship. The programme will inspire participants to increase their ambition, confidence and capability to develop an entrepreneurial mindset and enter pathways for starting a business through a programme of entrepreneurial training and mentoring tailored towards underrepresented groups/individuals specific learning needs.

HIE's current requirements are divided into two geographical Lots:

- Lot 1: Argyll and Bute, covering HIE areas only
- Lot 2: Moray

Note, Lot 1 covers Argyll and Bute geographical area i.e. excluding Arran, Cumbrae, and Helensburgh and Lomond.

There are two separate contract notices: bidders who are interested in bidding for the other contract can do so by locating the respective PCS notices, which were all published on the same date with 'Pathways to Start' in the contract description.

The services will be required from 20 October 2025 until 31 March 2026, unless terminated in accordance with the provisions of the Contract.

The delivery of the services, submission of all invoices and completion of all reports must be complete by 20 March 2026.

The budget available to deliver this service is between GBP187,500 and GBP220,000 (excluding VAT) PER LOT. The budget includes all costs related to delivering the services are not limited to, venue hire, catering, training materials/tools, fees, day rates and include provision for recovery of any other expenses, including but not limited to, travel and subsistence – all costs to be included in the Pricing Schedule. The contract value stated in the Contract Notice is GBP240,000 (ex VAT) per lot. This includes GBP20,000 contingency per lot which may be used e.g. if more than 45 participants could be recruited for the lot.

II.1.5) Estimated total value

Value excluding VAT: £240,000

II.1.6) Information about lots

This contract is divided into lots: No

II.2) Description

II.2.2) Additional CPV code(s)

- 80400000 - Adult and other education services
- 80500000 - Training services
- 80570000 - Personal development training services
- 80521000 - Training programme services
- 80522000 - Training seminars
- 80532000 - Management training services
- 72224000 - Project management consultancy services
- 79400000 - Business and management consultancy and related services
- 79410000 - Business and management consultancy services
- 79411100 - Business development consultancy services
- 79411000 - General management consultancy services
- 80210000 - Technical and vocational secondary education services

II.2.3) Place of performance

NUTS codes

- UKM63 - Lochaber, Skye & Lochalsh, Arran & Cumbrae and Argyll & Bute

II.2.4) Description of the procurement

Key tasks are:

1. Programme design
2. Outreach, stakeholder engagement and participant recruitment
3. Training delivery
4. Programme administration and monitoring.

Please refer to the Scope of Requirement and Guidance document for full details.

II.2.5) Award criteria

Quality criterion - Name: Q1 Prompt Payment Standard Clause / Weighting: pass/fail

Quality criterion - Name: Q2 Cyber Security / Weighting: pass/fail

Quality criterion - Name: Q3 Payment of the Real Living Wage / Weighting: pass/fail

Quality criterion - Name: Q4 UK Data Centres / Weighting: pass/fail

Quality criterion - Name: Q5 Management and Delivery Methodology / Weighting: 20%

Quality criterion - Name: Q6 Delivery Methodology – Inclusivity / Weighting: 15%

Quality criterion - Name: Q7 Management and Delivery Team / Weighting: 20%

Quality criterion - Name: Q8 Fair Work First / Weighting: 5%

Price - Weighting: 40%

II.2.6) Estimated value

Value excluding VAT: £240,000

II.2.7) Duration of the contract, framework agreement or dynamic purchasing system

Start date

20 October 2025

End date

31 March 2026

This contract is subject to renewal

No

II.2.10) Information about variants

Variants will be accepted: No

II.2.11) Information about options

Options: Yes

Description of options

HIE reserves the right, on giving reasonable written notice from time to time, to require changes to the Services (whether by way of the removal of Services, the addition of new Services, or increasing or decreasing the Services or specifying the order in which the Services are to be performed or the locations where the Services are to be provided). HIE shall not require any such change other than where it is permitted by Regulation 72 of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015. Examples of contract modifications are but not limited to:

-Additional funding is obtained (beyond the GBP20,000 contingency included in the total contract value of each lot) and used e.g. to increase the number of participants. Tendered rates will apply to any increases.

-Envisaged number of participants could not be recruited, resulting in reduced service requirements/volumes.

-Less than 16 participants could be recruited for the programme – HIE reserves the right not to proceed with the programme and terminate the contract.

-Recruited participant numbers exceed 45 for the lot. In this case (some of) the allowance of GBP20,000 will be utilised to provide services to further participants, as per tendered rates per participant.

-Where HIE determines (at our sole discretion) that demand for the programme under a lot is lower than expected, HIE reserves the right to re-allocate the budget for that Lot to the other Lot subject to the maximum total budget of GBP480,000 (i.e. the maximum total of the two lots).

-If Special Category Personal Data and/or other sensitive personal information requires further/different procedures, the supplier will be required to comply with these.

II.2.13) Information about European Union Funds

The procurement is related to a project and/or programme financed by European Union funds: No

II.2.14) Additional information

Economic operators may be excluded from this competition if they are in any of the situations referred to in Regulation 58 of the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015.

Section III. Legal, economic, financial and technical information

III.1) Conditions for participation

III.1.1) Suitability to pursue the professional activity, including requirements relating to enrolment on professional or trade registers

List and brief description of conditions

4A2 Bidders must confirm individuals involved in the delivery of the training programme are/will be registered with Disclosure Scotland's Protecting Vulnerable Groups Scheme in circumstances where individuals will be required to work with children and/or protected adults. Such registration must be in place prior to commencing training delivery to such individuals and/or cohorts including such individuals.

III.1.2) Economic and financial standing

Minimum level(s) of standards possibly required

It is a requirement of this Contract that bidders hold, or can commit to obtain prior to the commencement of any subsequently awarded Contract, the types and levels of insurance indicated below:

4B5a Professional Risk Indemnity – minimum GBP1m in aggregate

4B5b Employers (compulsory) Liability – minimum GBP5m for each and every claim. See <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/hse40.pdf> for more information

4B5c Public Liability – minimum GBP1m in aggregate

III.1.3) Technical and professional ability

List and brief description of selection criteria

4C4 If bidders intend to use a supply chain to deliver the requirements detailed in the Contract Notice, they should confirm they have (or have access to) the relevant supply chain management and tracking systems to ensure a resilient and sustainable supply chain. Please refer to Scope of Requirements for full requirements. If bidders do not pay at least 95% of valid invoices on time and are unable to provide a proportionate and timely improvement plan, their organisation will not be selected to participate further in this procurement.(pass/fail)

4C10 Bidders will be required to confirm whether they intend to subcontract and, if so, for what proportion of the contract. (for info)

III.2) Conditions related to the contract

III.2.2) Contract performance conditions

Refer to the Scope of Requirements and Guidance document.

III.2.3) Information about staff responsible for the performance of the contract

Obligation to indicate the names and professional qualifications of the staff assigned to performing the contract

Section IV. Procedure

IV.1) Description

IV.1.1) Type of procedure

Open procedure

IV.1.8) Information about the Government Procurement Agreement (GPA)

The procurement is covered by the Government Procurement Agreement: Yes

IV.2) Administrative information

IV.2.2) Time limit for receipt of tenders or requests to participate

Date

8 September 2025

Local time

12:00pm

IV.2.4) Languages in which tenders or requests to participate may be submitted

English

IV.2.6) Minimum time frame during which the tenderer must maintain the tender

Duration in months: 3 (from the date stated for receipt of tender)

IV.2.7) Conditions for opening of tenders

Date

8 September 2025

Local time

12:00pm

Section VI. Complementary information

VI.1) Information about recurrence

This is a recurrent procurement: No

VI.2) Information about electronic workflows

Electronic ordering will be used

Electronic invoicing will be accepted

Electronic payment will be used

VI.3) Additional information

Tenders must be submitted via the PCS postbox and must be received by the published deadline. Late tenders will not be accepted and HIE will reject any submissions received after the deadline. Email or hard copy responses will not be accepted.

It is estimated that the total value of the contract for this lot will be GBP 240,000 (excluding VAT). This is the figure which has been used in II.1.5 & II.2.6.

Where bidders rely on the capacity of other entities in order to meet selection criteria they are required to provide information relating to these entities with the relevant supporting SPD documentation being submitted.

SPD 3D.12 Bidders should refer to the "Conflict of Interest" Section within the Scope of Requirements when completing this question.

The Award criteria Questions 5-8 will be marked according to the following criteria - refer to the tender documents for the evaluation criteria for Questions 1-4 including the minimum threshold for Qs 5-7.

0 - Unacceptable - Nil or inadequate response which fails to demonstrate an ability to meet the requirement.

1 - Poor - Response is partially relevant but generally poor. It addresses some elements of the requirement but contains insufficient/limited detail or explanation to demonstrate how the requirement will be fulfilled.

2 - Acceptable - Response is relevant and acceptable. It addresses a broad understanding of the requirement but may lack details on how the requirement will be

fulfilled in certain areas.

3 - Good - Response is relevant and good. It is sufficiently detailed to demonstrate a good understanding and provides details on how the requirements will be fulfilled.

4 - Excellent - Response is completely relevant and excellent overall. It is comprehensive, unambiguous and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the requirement and provides details of how the requirement will be met in full.

NOTE: To register your interest in this notice and obtain any additional information please visit the Public Contracts Scotland Web Site at

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/Search/Search_Switch.aspx?ID=805237.

The buyer has indicated that it will accept electronic responses to this notice via the Postbox facility. A user guide is available at

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/sitehelp/help_guides.aspx.

Suppliers are advised to allow adequate time for uploading documents and to dispatch the electronic response well in advance of the closing time to avoid any last minute problems.

(SC Ref:805237)

Download the ESPD document here:

https://www.publiccontractsscotland.gov.uk/ESPD/ESPD_Download.aspx?id=805237

VI.4) Procedures for review

VI.4.1) Review body

Inverness Sheriff Court and Justice of the Peace Court

The Inverness Justice Centre, Longman Road

Inverness

IV1 1AH

Email

inverness@scotcourts.gov.uk

Telephone

+44 1463230782

Country

United Kingdom

Internet address

<https://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/the-courts/court-locations/inverness-sheriff-court-and-justice-of-the-peace-court>